

Faculty of Music, University of Toronto

*The Romance of the
Middle Ages*



Walter Hall
Wednesday, March 25, 1992
8 pm

The Romance of the Middle Ages

PROGRAMME

1. From Le Roman de la Rose by Guillaume de Lorris (1237)

Translation by Geoffrey Chaucer

Kalenda maya

Raimbaut de Vaqueiras

'May I be joined to you and drawn toward you, perfect lady.'

Dance royal

Anon.

Reis glorios

Giraut de Borneill

A sentinel stands watch to warn his companion when dawn approaches and his lover's husband returns.

2. From Le Roman de Fauvel, Book I, by Gervais de Bus (1310)

Favellandi vicium

Anon.

This text is a strong attack on the Pope, beginning: 'The Favellandi, being a blot and scum, now through avarice obtain the throne and highest place in the curia.'

Ductia

Anon.

Tuba sacre fidei - In arboris

Philippe de Vitry

First text: It is difficult to bring natural recognition and knowledge into harmony with the doctrines of faith. Second text: God cannot be approached with reason, only with faith.

3. 'Chanson Royale' by Guillaume de Machaut

Tres doulz amis - ma dame - cent mille fois

Jean Vaillant

Three poems promising undying devotion to a dear sweet lady.

Comment qu'a moy

Guillaume de Machaut

"I think of you night and day, honourable lady."

Or sus, vous dormes trop

Anon.

"Arise, you sleep too long, my lady." The poem uses the symbols of birds and their calls to conceal its message: cardonette (crow) = mockery; alouette (lark) = warning; coqu (cuckoo) = marital infidelity.

♣ INTERMISSION ♣

4. Decree on Minstrelsy from Edward II (1315)

O Potores

Anon.

"Oh you drinkers." A mock-serious argument in praise of wine. Through the use of scholastic logic the poet concludes that wine must not ever be diluted by water!

Dance

Anon.

Edi beo þu

Anon.

"Blessed be thou, heavenly queen." A hymn in praise of the Virgin.

5. From Decameron by Giovanni Boccaccio (1348)

Chominciamento di gioia

Anon.

Rosetta

Antonio Zacara da Teramo

'Rosetta, don't ever change your colour. I love you and want you more than any other flower.'

Venetia, mundi splendor - Michael

Johannes Ciconia

One text praises Michael Stena, the Doge of Venice, while the other one calls Venice the glory and ornament of Italy. The composer includes his own name as one who sings these hymns of praise.

Saltarello

Anon.

6. From Il Sollazzo by Simone Prudenzani (ca. 1400)

Cacciando per gustar

Magister Zaccaria

A 'hunter' finds himself in a market place amidst the cries and shouts of vendors and buyers. The entire text is an exercise in the double meaning of words connected with food and sex.

Trotto - Lamento di Tristano - la rotta

Anon.

Gram piant agli occhi

Francesco Landini

'Great tears from the eyes.' The lament of unrequited love.

7. From Le Roman du Comte d'Anjou by Jehan Maillart (ca. 1380)

Douce dame jolie

Machaut

'Sweet lovely lady, I am yours.'

THE ROMANCE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

The music of the Middle Ages, similar to the literature of the time, portrays both the reality and the fantasy of the medieval people. They were religious and profane, multifarious and simple, serious and light-hearted, and the complexity of their personalities is reflected in their poetry, prose, and music. Our programme tonight attempts to represent much of that diversity with compositions that are as contrasting as the simple and straightforward devotion to the Virgin Mary in 'Edi beo þu', the earthy 'Cacciando per gustar', the complicated and lofty fantasy of the idealization of womanhood found in many of the songs, and the simple and obvious effervescence of the dance music.

Music was an important part of most occasions, as for example 'Venetia, mundi splendor', which undoubtedly accompanied a civic ceremony in Venice, possibly the installation of the new Doge. Similar to people of modern times, the medieval citizens were incensed at the excesses of their spiritual and political leaders, a sentiment expressed in great detail in the Roman de Fauvel, and heard in 'Favellandi viciu'. At the same time they were capable of laughing at their own overly-serious ways by applying scolasticism to a frivolous subject, as in 'O Potores'.

Our literary and musical portrait is a rather broadly focused one, encompassing the geographical space of England, France and Italy, and the temporal span of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It is our intention to demonstrate the great variety of artistic images in those places and times, and especially to recreate the spirit of the people of the Middle Ages.



PERFORMERS

Barbara Hannigan, soprano
Ariel Harwood-Jones, soprano
Katerina Papadolias, soprano
Anne Wright, soprano
Bryan Martin, baritone
Christopher Ryan, baritone

Victor Ceni, recorders
Christine DeBoer, lute
Lori Gemmel, harp
Scott Harrison, trumpet
Lori Moore, trumpet
Brian Power, rebec, vielle
Gay Terry, vielle
Willie Wiebe, lute

HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE ENSEMBLES consist of a number of small groups of graduate and undergraduate students at the Faculty of Music who are interested in performing music in the style of its time. The programme is directed by Timothy McGee, assisted by Mary Enid Haines, Gregory Johnston, Bryan Martin and Ingrid Matthews.

We thank the following people who provided assistance of various kinds for this concert: Geoff Gaherty, Susan Grant, David Klausner, Ann Kuzdale, Bonnie McGee, Fred Perruzza, Domenico Pietropaolo, Sine Nomine, Robert Taylor, and The Toronto Consort.

We also acknowledge with gratitude the following people who have supported the Historical Performance programme with gifts and loans of instruments:

*Lembit Avesson
Rupert Edwards Foundation
McLean Foundation
David Klausner
John Kudelka
Jaak Liivoja-Lorius
Michael Remenyi
Harry Smaller
Elizabeth Smaller
Amy Stewart
Lonni Webster
Susan and Lawrence Zeifman*



